UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/26371
30 August 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

FURTHER REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN EL SALVADOR (ONUSAL)

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of my report of 29 June 1993 (S/26005) in which I undertook to keep the Security Council informed of developments concerning the identification and destruction of clandestine arms deposits belonging to the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN), the presence of which in the territory of El Salvador and that of certain neighbouring countries had been acknowledged by FMLN. It will be recalled that, as reported in the above-mentioned document (para. 5), FMLN had informed me that it would cooperate with ONUSAL in locating and destroying all such remaining weapons within a period of 45 days beginning on 21 June 1993, i.e., by 4 August 1993.

2. In the wake of that commitment, continuous and systematic operations were carried out by ONUSAL, on the basis of information provided by FMLN and with its active cooperation, to complete the destruction of the contents of all illegal caches by the above-mentioned deadline. By that date, however, only 85 per cent of the clandestine arms located had been destroyed. The delay was due mainly to logistical and operational difficulties, arising in particular from the dispersion of what turned out to be a large number of small deposits; the difficulties of the terrain; the poor condition and resulting instability of the explosives; the independent handling of relevant information by the various constituent groups of FMLN; and the need to coordinate with the national authorities in Nicaragua and Honduras. Further, a new list of clandestine arms was presented to ONUSAL on 3 August by one of the FMLN constituent groups.

3. The overall process of verification and destruction of FMLN weapons and equipment mandated by the Peace Accords, which was finally completed on 18 August 1993, includes two distinct phases. The first covers the period until the accidental explosion of the illegal arms cache in Managua on 23 May 1993 (see S/25901). Weapons verified and destroyed during that period include those that were turned in at 15 ONUSAL verification centres in El Salvador by 15 December 1992, as well as those voluntarily declared later, prior to the Managua explosion, which were held in Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador. The second phase covers ONUSAL's operations with respect to arms discovered in the immediate aftermath of the Managua incident and those declared by FMLN in compliance with its renewed commitment to disclose all its remaining weapons. These operations were carried out in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras.

4. Weapons and war-related matériel verified and destroyed during the first phase represent approximately 70 per cent of the total quantity located during both phases. Figures for items turned in by 15 December 1992 and in later voluntary declarations prior to the Managua explosion include, respectively: 5,929 and 1,216 individual arms; 334 and 26 support weapons; 163,891 and 219,080 rounds of ammunition; 25 and 7 rockets; and 756 and 1,632 grenades. In addition, 687 kilograms of explosives, 54 surface-to-air missiles and 29 pieces of communications equipment were also located and destroyed.

5. In the second phase, ONUSAL verified and destroyed approximately 30 per cent of the total FMLN weapons and munitions, representing those discovered or turned in as a consequence of the Managua explosion (20 per cent) and those declared following FMLN's commitment to me (10 per cent). They include, respectively: 1,701 and 1,005 individual arms; 3 and 16 support weapons; 1,413,380 and 2,236,255 rounds of ammunition; 1 and 107 rockets; 2,880 and 3,960 grenades; 2,026 and 2,394 kilograms of explosives and 34 pieces of communications equipment; as well as 19 and 1 surface-to-air missiles.

6. In addition to the armament found in the five safe houses in Nicaragua, of which I informed the Council in my report of 29 June 1993 (see S/26005, para. 6), the second phase entailed the uncovering, with the help of FMLN, of 114 arms caches in and outside El Salvador. The actual destruction of the matériel found in those caches which, owing to the difficulties mentioned above was an arduous and challenging task, was carried out by the military component of ONUSAL with the support of the civilian police component.

7. The condition and operational utility of the armament identified in the second phase varies. While the weapons and munitions encountered in Honduras and Nicaragua were in an advanced state of deterioration, those found in El Salvador, although fewer in number, had operative and logistic value. Arms were in good condition, ammunition was accessible, storage techniques were good and caches were distributed throughout 10 of the 14 geographical departments of the country.

8. Total figures for the complete inventory of FMLN arms and munitions identified since the cease-fire came into effect on 1 February 1992 thus include 10,230 arms (9,851 individual and 379 support weapons); 4,032,606 rounds of ammunition, 140 rockets, 9,228 grenades; 5,107 kilograms of explosives and 63 pieces of communications equipment; as well as 74 surface-to-air missiles. The number of identified arms caches belonging to all five constituent groups of FMLN is 128, of which 109 were in El Salvador, 14 in Nicaragua and 5 in Honduras.

9. Since, in accordance with the agreements, ONUSAL had to rely on the data voluntarily provided by the parties as its main source of information, a comparative analysis based on other official and unofficial sources was made in order to make a realistic assessment of FMLN inventory. The criteria considered included: estimates by well-known international and national research institutions on military matters; number of demobilization certificates issued by ONUSAL to ex-FMLN combatants (totalling 8,430 individuals, of whom 1,018 are war-disabled); and acquisition and operative plans disclosed. Furthermore, it should be noted that, according to Salvadorian Army press bulletins issued throughout the war, the Armed Forces captured more than 4,000 individual weapons

(some unofficial sources put this figure at 7,000), 270 support weapons and some 4,500,000 rounds of ammunition, as well as 31 surface-to-air missiles.

10. Taking these elements as a point of reference and on the basis of ONUSAL's verification of the destruction of weapons discovered or declared by FMLN, I am in a position to state that by all available indications its military structure has now been effectively dismantled and that its former combatants have been demobilized and have been reintegrated, within a framework of full legality, into the civil, institutional and political life of the country, as established in the Peace Accords. With the closing down of this delicate process, the apprehensions raised by the discovery of large quantities of undeclared weapons still in FMLN possession seem now to have been surmounted.

11. Despite some delays in providing all the lists of arms declared by each of its constituent groups, FMLN was forthcoming and cooperative during the entire operation. Attached to the present report as annex I is the text of a certificate subscribed by the five members of the former General Command and addressed to my Special Representative in El Salvador to the effect that, to the best of their knowledge, all weapons, ammunition, mines, other explosives and military equipment belonging to FMLN have now been located, collected and destroyed. The five further state that any weapons confiscated in future should be accounted for solely by the persons in whose possession they are found and will not be FMLN's responsibility. In a public statement to this effect, which is also attached to the present report as annex II, FMLN again reaffirms that it has definitively given up arms as a means to achieve its goals and is determined to undertake political action only within the legal and institutional framework of the country. On 23 August 1993, I received from the Coordinator General of FMLN, Mr. Schafik Handal, a letter dated 21 August in which, inter alia, he expresses on behalf of the FMLN leadership the view that they have now complied fully with their undertaking to end the military structure of FMLN.

12. The Salvadorian Supreme Electoral Tribunal (Tribunal Supremo Electoral) has been duly informed of the foregoing by my Special Representative. It will be recalled that the Tribunal, which, on the basis of ONUSAL's certification that all the items in the FMLN inventory had been accounted for and were being destroyed, had granted to it the status of a political party, had requested from ONUSAL a full report on the discovery of undeclared arms.

13. There is little doubt that, due to the circumstances surrounding a bitter armed conflict such as the one which prevailed in El Salvador for 12 years, the irregular nature of the war and the sense of insecurity inherent to a post-war period in any country, an unknown number of weapons and remnants of war-related matériel are likely to remain for some time in the hands of individuals or groups, including criminal ones. As announced by FMLN, these cases should be dealt with in accordance with the laws of the country. In addition, there could still be cases of individuals willingly handing in arms, or of the chance discovery of isolated arms caches which were at one time under the responsibility of individuals who subsequently lost their lives in the conflict, unbeknownst to FMLN.

14. The facts reported have brought into sharp focus the public's condemnation of armed groups and the futility of arms as a viable means to achieve political aims. In this climate, various groups and individuals have come forward

spontaneously to declare unregistered weapons. The Government of El Salvador, the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (COPAZ) and the Legislative Assembly should accelerate action in order to put into effect as quickly as possible regulations regarding private security services and the effective registration, possession and bearing of firearms. Such measures would enable the authorities to conduct a systematic and permanent campaign to recover all unregistered military weapons currently in the hands of private entities or individuals, thus contributing to the effective disarming of Salvadorian society.

15. I should like to commend the restraint exercised by President Cristiani during this delicate period. I should also like to thank the Governments of Nicaragua and Honduras for their full cooperation with ONUSAL in this matter. The United Nations will continue to lend its full support to the Salvadorian peace process, whose resilience and irreversibility have again been demonstrated during this difficult test. It is to be hoped that the activities leading to the March 1994 elections now will develop in an atmosphere of normality, thus reinforcing the peace process which in general has been exemplary.

Annex I

[Original: Spanish]

Certification

We, Schafik Jorge Handal, José Eduardo Sancho Castañeda, Joaquín Villalobos Huezo, Salvador Sánchez Cerén and Francisco Alberto Jovel Urquilla, members of the former General Command of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional,

HEREBY CERTIFY:

That, as we offered to do in our letter of 19 June, addressed to the Secretary-General, we the members of the former FMLN General Command have expedited and completed the task of locating, collecting and destroying, in close cooperation with ONUSAL, the remaining weapons held in scattered stockpiles over which we had no firm control.

That having completed the activities implied by this commitment, we are able to certify to you that to our knowledge there are no weapons, ammunition, mines, other explosives or military equipment belonging to FMLN remaining to be handed over and destroyed.

Consequently, the arms confiscated after this date shall be accounted for solely by the persons in whose possession they are found. FMLN disclaims all responsibility.

In order that this may be placed on record with the United Nations in the person of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Augusto Ramírez Ocampo, we hereby issue and sign this document in San Salvador, on 17 August 1993.

(Signed) Schafik Jorge HANDAL (Signed) José Eduardo SANCHO CASTAÑEDA

(Signed) Joaquín VILLALOBOS HUEZO (Signed) Salvador SÁNCHEZ CERÉN

(Signed) Francisco Alberto JOVEL URQUILLA

Annex II

[Original: Spanish]

FMLN communiqué

We, the political leaders of the five organizations making up the party, meeting in assembly on 14 August at the El Espino estate, hereby declare:

1. We are a new party, democratic and pluralistic, in which various revolutionary political tendencies coexist and will continue to coexist.

2. The full implementation of the Chapultepec Agreements, which embodies our objectives of demilitarization, democratization and social development, constitutes the basis of our programmatic platform.

3. We have unanimously reaffirmed our total commitment to the peace and democratization process initiated with the signing of the Agreements and, hence, our firm determination to strive, wholeheartedly and exclusively, for the consolidation of that process in the political, institutional and legal fields. Armed conflict is a thing of the past; we have completely abandoned it and do not consider it a valid option in this new phase.

4. We emphatically reject the activities of armed groups, whatever justification they may claim. We continue fighting for the establishment of a State in which the rule of law truly prevails and within that context we support the just struggles of the people's movement and civilian society.

5. We have completed the process of handing over and destroying all the weapons that were still in our possession. We consider that this chapter in the implementation of the Agreements by FMLN is closed.

As we have already stated to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, any further weapons that may be discovered will be the individual responsibility of those concerned.

6. We are moving forward as a party, united in an intensive electoral political effort with a single list of candidates and one strategy, in coalition with Convergencia Democrática. We shall continue striving to broaden this coalition.

7. We are aware that we represent hope to broad sections of the population and we shall pursue with responsibility, enthusiasm and energy our historic task of achieving, through political struggle, the establishment of a regime that guarantees, for all Salvadorians, economic development with democracy and social justice.

San Salvador, 16 August 1993

FMLN POLITICAL COMMITTEE